

**FUTURE FISHERIES IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
WINTER 2019 FUNDING CYCLE
Decision Notice and Response to Public Comment**

Prepared by:
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
February 13, 2019

Proposal and Final Action

Members of the Future Fisheries Review Panel submitted funding recommendations for 7 proposed projects from the Winter 2019 funding cycle of the Future Fisheries Improvement Program (FFIP) to the Montana Fish & Wildlife Commission (Commission) for final approval. The Future Fisheries Review Panel is an independent board appointed by the governor (87-1-273, MCA). As a final action, the Commission adopted all the funding recommendations, as submitted by the Future Fisheries Review Panel, at their public meeting held in Helena on February 13, 2019.

The FFIP was established in 1995 to establish and implement a statewide voluntary program that promotes fishery habitats and spawning areas for the rivers, streams, and lakes of Montana's fisheries in order to enhance future fisheries through natural reproduction (87-1-272, MCA).

Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA)

MEPA requires Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) to assess the potential consequences of the proposed action for the human and natural environment. Environmental Assessments (EA's) were prepared and released by FWP on January 3, 2019 for four individual proposed projects associated with the Winter 2019 Future Fisheries funding cycle. The 30-day public comment period ended February 4, 2019. These proposed projects included:

1. Big Creek Instream Flow Renewal (Park County)
2. Hells Canyon Creek Instream Flow Renewal (Madison County)
3. Nevada Creek Phase 3A reconstruction (Powell County)
4. Ross Fork Rock Creek fish passage (Granite County)

The remaining 3 projects funded by the Commission approval fell either the federal National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), or external Environmental Assessment processes initiated by the project applicant.

Projects that fall under NEPA:

5. Crow Creek phase 2 stream restoration (003-2019)
6. Selway Creek Barrier (010-2019)

Projects with an EA in process by applicant:

7. Rattlesnake Creek dam removal (008-2019)

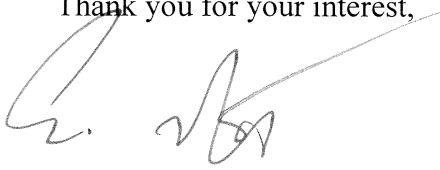
Summary of Public Comment

No comments were received.

Decision Notice

The public comment period closed on the four projects (1-4 above), and no comments were received. Based on the EAs' disclosures and analyses of potential impacts, FWP concludes that the proposed actions will not result in any significant impacts. For these three projects, FWP will adopt the draft EA as the final EA and proceed with the projects as planned. Copies of the final EA's are available upon request.

Thank you for your interest,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric Roberts", is written over the closing text.

Eric Roberts
Fish Management Bureau Chief, Fisheries Division
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks